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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

1. (Currently Amended) A metal halide lamp, comprising:

a ceramic arc tube that is composed of a main body and two narrow tube parts provided at respective ends of the main body;

a pair of electrodes provided inside the main body;

two feeders, each being connected at one end thereof

to a different one of the electrodes inside the main body, and extending through a different one of the narrow tube parts, so as to be external to the arc tube at another end;

a starting wire that is connected to one of the feeders, and that is in a vicinity of or contacts an outer surface of the arc tube; and

a current suppressing unit that is on a current path of the starting wire, and suppresses or cuts off current on the path.

2. (Original) The metal halide lamp of claim 1, wherein the current suppressing unit is a circuit breaking element.

3. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 2, wherein the circuit breaking element is a resistor.

4. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 3, wherein a resistance value of the resistor is in a range of 1 k $\Omega$  to 1 M $\Omega$ , inclusive.

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5. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 4, having a power rating in a range of 50W to 400W, inclusive,

wherein two terminals that each connect to a power supply path are provided at two different positions on the circuit breaking element, a distance between the terminals being at least 4.5 mm.

6. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 5, wherein  
the arc tube is accommodated in an outer tube,  
a sleeve that encloses at least the main body is provided between the outer tube and the arc tube,

a first supporting part and a second supporting part are provided at respective ends of the sleeve in order to hold the sleeve, and

the circuit breaking element is provided in the outer tube, in a space that is outside a space between the first supporting part and second supporting part.

7. (Original) The metal halide lamp of claim 6, wherein  
the first supporting part is joined to the feeder to which the starting wire is connected, and has an aperture through which the starting wire passes, and  
a minimum distance between the first supporting part and a part of the starting wire that passes through the aperture is at least 4.5 mm.

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8. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 7, wherein one end of the starting wire is wound around a part of the arc tube that is resistant to deformation if the arc tube breaks.

9. (Original) The metal halide lamp Claim 2, wherein the circuit breaking element is a capacitor.

10. (Previously Presented) The metal halide lamp of Claim 1, wherein the current suppressing unit is a circuit breaking element having a characteristic of cutting the flow of current to the starting wire within a predetermined amount of time of an outer tube discharge.

11. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 10, wherein the predetermined amount of time is 10 seconds.

12. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 10, wherein the predetermined amount of time is 1 second.

13. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 12, wherein the circuit breaking element is a fuse whose current capacity is equal to or less than a value of current required for ordinary operation of the metal halide lamp.

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14. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 13, wherein two terminals that connect to a power supply path are provided at two different positions on the circuit breaking element, a distance between the terminals being at least 4.5 mm.

15. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 14, wherein the fuse is the starting wire.

16. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 15, wherein when abnormal discharge occurs, the starting wire melts, within the predetermined amount of time, to an extent that a discharge distance is insufficient for abnormal discharge to continue.

17. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 16, wherein the starting wire is made of a metal selected from the group consisting of molybdenum, tungsten, niobium, and iron, or of an alloy that contains a metal selected from the group.

18. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 17, wherein the starting wire is a molybdenum wire that has a diameter of 0.2 mm or less.

19. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 18, wherein the arc tube is accommodated in an outer tube, a sleeve that encloses at least the main body is provided between the outer tube and the arc tube,

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a first supporting part and a second supporting, part are provided at respective ends of the sleeve in order to hold the sleeve, and

the circuit breaking element is provided in the outer tube, in a space that is outside a space between the first supporting part and second supporting part.

20. (Original) The metal halide lamp of claim 19, wherein  
the first supporting part is joined to the feeder to which the starting wire is connected, and  
has an aperture through which the starting wire passes, and  
a minimum distance between the first supporting part and a part of the starting wire that  
passes through the aperture is at least 4.5 mm.

21. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 19, wherein  
one end of the starting wire is wound around a part of the arc tube that is resistant to  
deformation if the arc tube breaks.

22. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 2, further comprising:  
a sleeve that encloses the arc tube; and  
a supporting part that supports the sleeve at at least one end of the sleeve, and is conductive,  
wherein the starting wire passes through the supporting part in a state of insulation from the  
supporting part.

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23. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 22, wherein  
the starting wire passes through insulation provided on the supporting part, the insulation  
lying between the starting wire and the supporting part.

24. (Original) The metal halide lamp of Claim 23, wherein  
a slant distance between the starting wire and one  
of the electrodes that is not the electrode connected to the starting wire via the one of the  
feeders, is shorter than a distance between the electrodes.

25-28. (Cancelled)